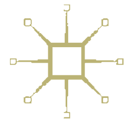
# THE SHAH OF IRAN, THE IRAQI KURDS & THE LEBANESE SHIA




ARASH REISINEZHAD



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Arash Reisinezhad

# The Shah of Iran, the Iraqi Kurds, and the Lebanese Shia



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*To Mohiaddin Mesbahi*

# Praise Page

"Arash Reisinezhad's account of Pahlavi policy toward the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shi'a includes rich details and a number of new insights. He has mined an impressive variety of archives, including SAVAK materials, to reveal a trove of reports, messages, assessments and comments, some, of which are revelatory. Not surprisingly, the reader learns that the Shah's designs were often inconstant and contradictory and that key Iranian officials often were assiduous in their efforts to undermine leading figures in Iraq and Lebanon. Reisinezhad performs excellent yeoman service in opening up an expanded realm for further research and analysis. The Shah of Iran, the Iraqi Kurds, and the Lebanese Shi'a deserves a wide readership among scholars and analysts."

—Augustus Richard Norton, *Emeritus Professor of Anthropology and International Relations, Boston University, USA*

"One of America's greatest criticisms against Iran is the Islamic Republic's support for non-state actors in the Middle East. But contrary to the common perception that this policy is a function of the ideology of the current regime in Tehran, Reisinezhad brilliantly shows that this support started already under the Shah and is rooted in Iran's strategic loneliness. This is a must-read for anyone who seeks to understand Iran's foreign policy and the state of affairs in the Middle East."

—Trita Parsi, *Author of* Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States *and* A Single Role of the Dice: Obama's Diplomacy with Iran

"In an age when 'cut and paste' dominates scholarship, 'making politicized claims' dominates analysis of the issues in the public sphere, and tweeing overshadows conversation about politics, it is refreshing to read a text meticulously shedding light on a less explored area of the political science, i.e., non-state foreign policy. Dr. Reisinezhad's success in doing all these and more demonstrate his insights, care, and commitment to knowledge production. The choice of Iranian policy toward two minorities, the Iraqi Shi'as, and Kurds prior to the Iranian Revolution of 1979 shows his insight into the master science of political science because, not only it offers an informative and analytical historical account, but also unravels the mystery of the present attitude and policies of the Islamic Republic in post revolution, free from cliché and simple accounts that dominates the works on Iran's behavior; a fine work of history, politics, and foreign policy."

—Farhang Rajaee, *Professor of Political Science and Humanities, Carleton University, USA*

"Dr. Reisinezhad has written the most exhaustive analysis of pre-revolutionary Iran's complex relations with non-state actors in the Middle East. The book relies on a wealth of primary Persian and English language sources to vividly describe how Iran's last monarch, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1941–1979), strategically used the Kurds of Iraq and the Shi'as of Lebanon to push imperial Iran's agenda in the Middle East. The author should be commended for writing such a pioneer and vigorous book that is theoretically sophisticated and factually rich. The volume persuasively debunks the myth that the Islamic Republic of Iran's use of non-state actors is a radical departure from Iran's traditional foreign policy. The book is a must read for any serious student of Iran's foreign policy."

—Mohsen Milani, *Executive Director of the Center for Strategic & Diplomatic Studies and Professor of Politics, University of South Florida, USA, and author of* The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic

"This is a book of tremendous importance, shedding light on a rarely studied aspect of Iranian diplomatic history. Through extensive reliance on declassified government documents and both primary and secondary sources, Reisinezhad demonstrates how the Iranian government courted and employed non-state actors for geostrategic purposes long before the 1978–1979 revolution. For anyone interested in an in-depth understanding of Iran's pre-revolutionary foreign policy, this is essential reading."

—Mehran Kamrava, *Professor and Director of the Center for International and Regional Studies, Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, Qatar, and Author of* Troubled Waters: Insecurity in the Persian Gulf

"This is a book of immense importance, bringing into sharp focus for the first time the intricacies of the Pahlavi regime's relations with non-state actors in the region, a region which it aspired to shape and influence. Reisinezhad's use of many untapped Iranian primary sources – as well as American ones of course – sets this project apart for the level of detail and insights that it provides for the conduct of pre-revolution Iran's foreign, that is to say, regional, policies. The razor-sharp analysis is enriched by the broader context that the author provides for Iran's foreign policy and the approaches that Tehran had adopted for the conduct of its sub-state level relationships – policies and relationships which arguably Iran's revolutionary masters have built on. This is the kind of book that excites with each turning page; talk of bringing modern history to life!"

—Anoush Ehteshami, *Professor of International Relations, Durham University, UK, and author of* Iran: Stuck in Transition *(2017)*

"The discipline of international relations has long been a state-centric one. As such, state-to-state relations have been the focus of much of the scholarly literature on foreign policy. However, parallel to their state-to-state relations, many countries have been keen to develop relations with myriad of nonstate actors to advance their foreign policy goals. Using the example of Iran, Reisinezhad explains how the Shah of Iran developed a nuanced policy towards the Iraqi Kurds and Lebanese Shia to advance Iran's broader regional foreign policy goals. This is a theoretically rigorous book that goes a long way in contributing to our understanding of the genesis and development of Iran's state-nonstate relations that have continued to play a major role in the country's foreign policy formulation after the fall of the Pahlavi monarchy and the establishment of the Islamic Republic. The author's reliance on a vast array of primary sources and a wealth research makes this book a must-read for scholars of contemporary Iranian foreign policy."

—Nader Entessar, *Professor of Political Science, University of South Alabama, USA, and author of* Kurdish Politics in the Middle East

# Acknowledgments

There is not enough room here to thank each and every one who deserves credit for the present book. First and foremost, I am forever indebted to Mohiaddin Messbahi, whose intellectual imagination coupled with generous and patient suggestions guided it throughout and helped bring it to full fruition. I have been privileged and honored to have continuous access to his advice and critique, and I hope to be able to continue my study of politics and international relations in the tradition he has pioneered and to raise the standard he has set.

Also, I owe much gratitude to Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs and the newly established Muslim World Studies Center at Florida International University as well as the Mohsin and Fauzia Jaffer Foundation for giving me the opportunity to investigate this important issue in depth. I would like to thank Thomas Breslin and Ronald Cox for providing methodological advice. I am also grateful to Nasser Hadian, Malcolm Byrne, and Russell Lucas for archival research advice. I also benefited from Mohammad Homayounvash's thoughtful criticism and intellectual support. Last but not least, I would like to thank Fariba Adelkhah and Centre de Recherches Internationales at Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po) for facilitating my research in Paris.

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I must also thank my dear friends Parisa Farhadi, Kaveh Mirazei, Nikoloz Esitashvili, Hamid Serri, Peyman Karvani, Naisy Sarduri, Mirsad Krijestorac, Mohsen Abbaszadeh, Nima Baghdadi, Ehsan Darvishi, Tirdad Bonakdar, Saeed Mousavi, Ehsan Houshmand, Hasan Vaezi, Mehran Raman-Mashhadi, Fatemeh Fazel, Bahram Hasanvand, Mohsen Houshmand, Mehrdad Mirzaei, Layla Massoudi, Shahrokh Falati, Somayeh Rashidi, Vahid Abedini, Ali Nematpour, Seyyed Abbas Alamdar, and Reza Iranmanesh, whose unstinting support I should acknowledge at multiple junctures in the process of seeing the present enterprise through.

# Contents

# Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| AAD | Access to Archive Database |
| CENTO | Central Treaty Organization |
| CFPF | Central Foreign Policy |
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| DCI | Director of Central Intelligence |
| DNSA | Digital National Security Archive |
| FRUS | Foreign Relations of the United States |
| HSF | Harold Saunders Files |
| ICP | Iraqi Communist Party |
| IDF | Israeli Defense Force |
| INR | Bureau of Intelligence and Research |
| IPC | Iraq Petroleum Company |
| JPL | Johnson Presidential Library |
| KDP | Kurdistan Democratic Party |
| KPL | Kennedy Presidential Library |
| KSF | Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files |
| KT | Kissinger Transcripts |
| NARA | U.S. National Archives and Records Administration |
| NCRC | National Council of the Revolutionary Command |
| NDP | National Democratic Party |
| NEA | Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs |
| NIE | National Intelligence Estimate |
| NPL | Nixon Presidential Library |
| NSC | The National Security Council |

| | |
|---|---|
| NSF | National Security File |
| OPEC | Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries |
| PFLP | Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine |
| PLO | Palestinian Liberation Organization |
| PRF | People's Resistance Force |
| RCC | Revolutionary Command Council |
| RKF | Robert Komer Files |
| SAVAK | National Intelligence and Security Organization |
| SCOR | Security Council Official Records |
| SISC | Supreme Islamic Shia Council |
| SSNP | Syrian Social Nationalist Party |
| UAR | United Arab Republic |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNARMS | United Nations Archives Records Management Section |
| UNGA | United Nations General Assembly |
| USSR | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics |
| USUN | United States Mission to the United Nations |




CHAPTER 1

# Introduction

"We should combat to and contain the threat in the East coast of the Mediterranean to prevent shedding blood on Iranian soil."[1] These words were uttered by Colonel Mojtaba Pashaie, head of the Middle East Directorate of SAVAK, Iran's National Intelligence and Security Organization, to weaken Pan-Arabism in the Middle East in the aftermath of the Iraqi coup of 1958. It was the beginning of the Green Plan strategy in Southern Lebanon. Iran's Green Plan planted the seed of Iran's connections with the Shia community in Lebanon. With charismatic, Iranian-born Seyyed Musa Sadr's departure to Lebanon, Tehran's relations with the Lebanese Shia hit the new course.

Pahlavi Iran also sided with the Iraqi Kurds against Iraq. The Iraqi coup of 1958 toppled the pro-Western monarchy and established a pan-Arab, pro-Moscow republic on Iran's western borders. Within this context, SAVAK was instructed by the Shah to build a strategic connection with the Kurds in Northern Iraq. Led by Mullah Mustafa Barzani, the Kurdish guerrillas tied down the Iraqi Army and turned Baghdad away from posing a threat to Iran's western provinces and the Persian Gulf. Contrary to popular opinion regarding the Shah's foreign policy, the U.S. did not initially side with Iran's strategy toward the Kurds in the period between

[1] To discuss more about the Green Plan, see Letter from Isa Pejman, reprinted in Alamuti, Mostafa, *Iran dar Asr-i Pahlavi [Iran in the Pahlavi Era]* Vol.II, Jang-i Qodrat dar Iran [Power Struggle in Iran] (London, 1992) pp. 521–3.



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1961 and 1972. Despite maintaining close ties with the Shah, the White House did not share his threat assessment toward Iraq. It was only after the Tehran summit of 1972 that President Richard Nixon instructed Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) covert cooperation with SAVAK in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Iran's strategic connections with the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia ushered in a strategy toward non-state entities in the Middle East. It was the beginning of Iran's "non-state foreign policy"—a specific foreign policy intended to build connections with political and militant groups and movements. Non-state foreign policy refers to connections between a state and a political-militant non-state actor. This policy relates to how a state builds and manages ties with a non-state actor(s) through mechanisms beyond the common foreign policy. In addition to revolutionary Iran, the non-state foreign policy has been implemented by the Soviet Union in support of communist parties, leftist movements, and liberation militias during the Cold War. Other countries, like China, Cuba, and more importantly, the U.S., have followed the same policy.

Almost a half-century later, Iran's non-state foreign policy expanded to an unprecedented level. Late in 2004, King Abdullah of Jordan popularized a controversial phrase that still dominates the heart of the geopolitics of the Middle East: the Shia Crescent. "If pro-Iran parties or politicians dominate the new Iraqi government, a new 'crescent' of dominant Shia movements or governments stretching from Iran into Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon could emerge to alter the traditional balance of power between the two main Islamic sects and pose new challenges to the U.S. interests and allies." In Sunni Arab leaders' eyes, the Shia Crescent has been shaped around the armature of strategic connections between Iran and Shia non-state entities. However, this outlook failed to recognize the roots of Iran's non-state foreign policy before the Islamic Revolution. In reality, Iran's non-state foreign policy emerged in the midst of the Cold War.

Pre-revolutionary Iran's support for non-state entities was not limited to the support for the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia. The Shah backed the royalist Mutawakkilite forces against the Soviet-backed, pro-Nasser Republicans in North Yemen in the 1960s. In the last months of his reign, he began siding with Afghan Mujahedin against communist Kabul and the Red Army in Afghanistan. The Shah financially and logistically supported a remote western-backed UNITA (National Union for the Total

Independence of Angola) in fighting the Soviet-backed MPLA (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) in Angola.[2] Despite their significance, none of them played major parts in Iran's non-state foreign policy as Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia did. First, connections with the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia are still significant. Since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has sided with both non-state actors against its regional foes Israel and Baath Iraq.

Second, the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia are geographically and culturally closer to Iran. Shia Islam has been the predominant religion in Iran since the early sixteenth century. The Kurds are an Iranian ethnic group whose culture and language are much closer to the people living in modern Iran than to Turks or Arabs. Third, both the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia have affected Iranian society and domestic politics. Although the Iraqi Kurds have been backed by both the Shah and the Islamic Republic, the Kurdish separatism in Iraq has had spillover effects on Iran's Kurdistan. In the pre-revolutionary era, several Iranian revolutionaries were trained on military bases in the south of Lebanon. On top of that, religious networks between Sadr with the Shia Marja, including Ayatollah Khomeini, had tremendous effects on the dynamics of the Revolution of 1979.

Iran's connections with political-militant non-state entities in the Middle East have been at the heart of international and regional security for about four decades. While the Islamic Republic's support for non-state entities in the Middle East, like Hezbollah, has framed the country as an allegedly top state "sponsor of terrorism," the Shah's support for the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia was never framed as a significant threat to international peace and security. Additionally, the breadth and depth of these ties, along with Iran's geostrategic location and its antagonistic relationship with the U.S. over the last three decades, have given rise to a body of literature on Iran's foreign policy. While much ink has been spilled on the issue, there has been a void in the analysis of the country's ties with non-states entities. Despite their profound impact on the power arrangement of the region and on U.S. national security, these connections have been partially unknown to Western audiences. In fact, the sensitivity and complexity of the issue, as well as the lack of access to

[2] The Angolan Civil War (1975–2002) was a war between two former liberation militant groups of MPLA and UNITA.

Iranian sources and officials, have caused most experts to avoid dedicating extensive efforts to the matter.

The current literature on Iran's ties with non-state actors could be classified into four categories. The first category focuses on regional political-militant groups per se and only indirectly and superficially addresses their ties with Iran. The main goal is to unravel the hidden black box of the socio-political context, internal power struggles, decision-making processes, and institutional arrangements of each non-state entity.[3] The second category includes literature on Iranian foreign policy in general, and on Iran's relations with the U.S. in particular.[4] However, this specific literature has downplayed Iran's non-state foreign policy by reducing Iran-U.S. relations to accounts of the coup in 1953 and the turmoil of the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Framing Iranian-American "special relations" as a direct path from the coup to the revolution, such an overly simplistic narrative neglects the crucial period between those two momentous events. The third category looks at terrorist networks, considering Iran's ties with these groups highly suspect. Blinded by the condemnatory rhetoric, these textbooks frame Iran's connections as the source of instability in the Middle East.[5] The last category focuses on Shiism and Shia communities as well as on Kurdish communities. These books are notable for taking a longer view of the history of the Shia and

[3] "Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God, From Revolution to Institutionalization" by Eitan Azani; "Hezbollah" by Naim Qassem; "Hezbullah's Documents: From the 1985, open letter to the 2009 Manifesto" by Joseph Alagha; "Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God" by Matthew Levitt; "Hamas" by Beverley Milton- Edwards and Stephen Farrell, and "The Brotherhood: America's Next Great Enemy" by Erick Stakelbeck.

[4] "After Khomeini" by Anoushirvan Ehteshami; "Reading in Iran Foreign Policy After September 11" by Abbas Maleki and Kaveh Afrasiabi; "Iran in World Politics: The Question of the Islamic Republic" by Arshin Adib- Moghaddam; "Reflections on Iran's Foreign Policy" and "Ideology and Pragmatism in Iran's Foreign Policy" both by Rouhollah Ramazani; "The Treacherous Alliance" by Trita Parsi; "The Eagle and Lion" by James Bill; "The Great Satan vs. the Mad Mullahs" by William Beeman; "The Political History of Modern Iran: From Tribalism to Theocracy" by Mehran Kamrava, and "The Persian Puzzle" by Kenneth Pollack.

[5] "Jihad Ultimatum" by J. D. Randall; "The Axis of the Evil: *The Axis of the Evil: Iran, Hizballah, and the Palestinian Terror,* Routledge" by Shaul Shay, and "Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, and Global Jihadi: A New Conflict Paradigm for the West" by Dore Gold and Daniel Diker.

the Kurds.[6] Similarly, relations with Iran are merely secondary topics in this category.

The mainstream manuscripts on pre-revolutionary Iran's foreign policy has framed the Shah, in final word, as "the U.S. puppet" whose foreign policy was, by and large, in line with the White House. Conversely, the revisionist manuscripts of the literature have recently framed the Shah as an ambitious leader who unsuccessfully tried to take a more independent policy in the region and beyond. In contrast to both mainstream and revisionist views toward the Shah's foreign policy, the present book shows how Pahlavi Iran built an effective non-state foreign policy to contain international, regional, and domestic threats. It also shows how the Shah successfully countered the U.S. interests in the region and manipulated it in managing Iran's non-state foreign policy. In short, the present book is a post-revisionist.

From this perspective, the present work sheds new light on the emergence and fluctuation of Iran's connections with non-state entities in Iraq and Lebanon during the Shah's era. The book is not intended to cover different aspects of Iran's foreign policy under the Shah's reign; rather, it narrates the story of Iran's non-state foreign policy by focusing on specific geopolitical and geocultural threats and opportunities in the period between 1958 and 1979. It also examines domestic institutions that pushed the Pahlavi regime to build Iran's non-state foreign policy.

The present book contributes to the literature in multiple ways. First, it traces the ebbs and flows within Iran's non-state foreign policy under the Shah's reign. The primary focus is on the relations between a state, Iran, with non-state actors, the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia. Second, it challenges the widespread view of Iran's non-state allies as only allied after the Islamic Revolution of 1979 by highlighting the Shah's role in shaping Iran's non-state foreign policy. Third, the book provides yet another example of how the course of the Cold War and the Middle East politics were forged by one of the superpowers' allies in the Third World, that is,

[6] "The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future" by Vali Nasr; "The Shi'a Worlds and Iran" edited by Sabrina Marvin; "Shiism and Politics in the Middle East" by Laurence Louer; "A Modern History of the Kurds" by David McDowall, "Invisible Nation: How the Kurds' Quest for Statehood Is Shaping Iraq and the Middle East" by Quil Lawrence; "The Kurds: A People in Search of Their Homeland" by Kevin Mckiernan; "No Friends But the Mountains: The Tragic History of the Kurds" by John Bulloch.

Iran. The Shah, as a Middle Eastern leader, actively contained threats by manipulating the superpowers. With its detailed investigation of Iran's non-state foreign policy, the book shows that Iran and the U.S. had significant tensions over the Kurdish War in a period between 1961 and 1972. It fleshes out our understanding of Iran-America relations and recasts the question of U.S.-Iranian relations at its zenith in the 1960s and 1970s. Fourth, it puts emphasis on the significance of militant-political non-state entities in the world, in general, and in the Middle East, in particular. The proliferation of these entities in the Middle East has challenged pivotal assumptions of realism and eroded the state-centric international politics and traditional Westphalian nation-state claim on sovereignty. Ranging from social movements and guerrillas to semi-state actors, non-state actors acted within and upon the international system. From this point of view, the present book is a step toward a better understanding of the relation between states and non-state entities. Fifth, the book challenges the dominant view of Iran's foreign policy decision-making processes. The dominant view has framed Iran's foreign policy as the Shah's foreign policy. Conversely, the present book shows that other institutions, especially SAVAK, played a key role in shaping the trajectory of Iran's non-state foreign policy. Sixth, the book assesses the trajectory of Iran's non-state foreign policy by highlighting geopolitical/geocultural threats and opportunities, rather than ideology, in the region. Seventh, the book does not focus just on politics; rather, it is a multi-disciplinary study, tackling different domains of social science. Along with politics, it demonstrates the significance of culture and religion to investigate how connections with Iran affected the solidarity of non-state entities' communities. Lastly, the book is a historiography. It provides a theoretical plot to narrate a story, a story of the history of Iran's non-state foreign policy under the Shah's reign.

It is tempting to capture Iran's non-state foreign policy in terms of Iranian leaders' power ambitions. It could be also explained as some mere ethnic or religious formula. Iran's support for the Kurds against Iraq could be considered as another course of a long-standing rivalry between the Iranian and the Arab. As a constitutive ethnic group of the Iranian people, the Kurds have been culturally and linguistically affiliated with the Iranian civilization. Iran's assistance to the Shia in the south of Lebanon could be also explicated as an example of the long-running tension between the Shia and Sunni variants of Islam. With its overwhelmingly Shia popula-

tion, Iran has been the Shia hub in the Islamic world. One could also emphasize on Baghdad-Tehran and Cairo-Tehran competition for regional hegemony as driving forces behind Iran's siding with the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia. Since both Iran and Iraq possessed vast oil reservoirs and were seeking to influence oil policy in their favor, an economic-energy competition could be considered as a final source of Iran's non-state foreign policy. At the same time, Pahlavi Iran was the U.S. major ally in the Cold War era, while Baghdad, on the whole, oscillated between the Soviet camp and neutrality. Therefore, the extension of the Cold War completion in the region could be introduced as an ultimate driving force for Iran's non-state foreign policy.

Though significant, a deep analysis reveals that there have been a number of factors, rather than a single one, which influenced the formation of Iran's non-state foreign policy. Like other states of the region, Pahlavi Iran encountered major "threats" and "opportunities" that had decisive ramifications for Iran's non-state foreign policy. Such a coherent system of the threat-opportunity interplayed on three "levels" of international, regional, and domestic. Iran's domestic institutional arrangement under the Shah's reign was added to the crosscutting complexities of the threat-opportunity system. From this perspective, the present theoretical framework reveals both a *geopolitical* and an *institutional* narrative of Iran's non-state foreign policy.

Pahlavi Iran's internal institutions underscored the complexity of continuity and change of Iran's non-state foreign policy. Institutions are recognizable patterns of rules and practices. Each institution includes "the formal and informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity" that generates the socio-political changes.[7] New institutionalism highlights the key role of institutions in socio-political changes. The present study utilizes historical new institutionalism, which focuses on interactions among institutions in specific historical junctures. Therefore, major transformations in the trajectory of Iran's non-state foreign policy occurred within institutional arrangements in different historical stages.

Geopolitics deals with relationships among geography, power, and world order, stressing the role of geographical constraints and opportuni-

[7] Hall, Peter and Rosemary C. R. T Taylor, Political Science and the Three New Institutionalism. (1996), XLIV, p. 938.

ties in the conduct of politics. A specific set of threats and opportunities convinced Pahlavi Iran to build its connections in Northern Mesopotamia and the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. This set of threats and opportunities had political, cultural, and economic aspects. From this perspective, Mohiaddin Mesbahi's theory provides a robust framework for the evolution and dynamics of Iran's non-state foreign policy. This framework offers a "tripartite" view of the international system "with three interrelated yet distinct structures, namely the coercive-military, the normative-social, and the economic."[8] Along with geographical factors, each state experiences the symbiotic impact from interactions with tripartite domains and forces. From this perspective, the Cold War Middle East possessed three clearly interrelated, yet distinct, domains of geopolitics, geoculture, and geoeconomy. It had been riven with powerful pre-modern religious-cultural-ethnic divisions. It also contained distinctive ideological features that caused the emergence of potent geocultural forces in the region. Its enormous oil fields, the disputes over oil prices, and oil pipeline routes shaped the geoeconomic forces. Lastly, the geostrategic location of the Middle East and its vicinity to one of the two superpowers, internal territorial disputes, and power rivalries among the regional states had constituted major geopolitical forces in the Middle East.

At the same time, three domains of geopolitics, geoculture, and geoeconomics are embedded in three levels of international, regional, and domestic. As a perfect example of a conflict formation in the Cold War era, the Middle East had autonomous regional and domestic levels of security. The insecurity of ruling elites domestically played a significant role in shaping the dynamics of (in)security in the region.[9] Crafted out of the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, the Middle Eastern countries (except for Iran) were postcolonial insecure regimes, lacking simultaneously state identity, national identity, and regime identity. The lack of a strong state in the region spilled over into regional security politics that had emerged since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. It was driven by a complex agenda of ideological competitions, long-standing religious-ethnic division, oil rival policies, border disputes, and power status. The Middle

[8] Mesbahi, Mohiaddin, Free and Confined: Iran and the International System. (Spring 2011). *Iranian Review of Foreign Affairs*, 5 (2): 9–34.

[9] Buzan, Barry and Ole Waver. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security.* (Cambridge University Press, 4 Dec 2003). p. 187.

East had been also subject to the continuous and heavy impact of the international Cold War rivalry. Before then, its regional state system had been shaped through the British and French interventions. In the aftermath of World War II, the Middle East soon became the third battleground in the Cold War, after Europe and Asia. Heavily manifested in intense patterns of "enmity-amity,"[10] including Iranian-Arab and Shia-Sunni enmities, the regional dynamics were so vigorous and durable that neither the U.S. nor the USSR had effective control over the region.

Consequently, the present theoretical framework demonstrates critical historical junctures, forces (internal/external), and actors (decision-makers/elites/institutions) that played a key role in the trajectory of Iran's non-state foreign policy. It also demonstrates that the roots and effects of Iran's non-state foreign policy could be traced to three "domains" of geopolitical, geocultural and geoeconomic, and at the same time, on three "levels" of international, regional, and domestic.

The present book employs a "historical analysis" approach to Iran's non-state foreign policy. I have used three types of sources. The most important types of data are declassified documents mostly gathered from major archival collections in both the U.S. and Iran.

On the Iranian side of the story, the book is heavily based on major documents obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and SAVAK, gathered from Markaz-e Amouzesh va Pajooheshhay-e Beynolmelali-e Vezarat-e Omour-e Kharejeh (Center of International Research and Education of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Markaz-e Asnad-Enghelab-e Eslami (Islamic Revolution Document Center), and Sazman-e Asnad va Ketabkhane Melli-e Jomouhori Eslami (National Library and Archives of Islamic Republic of Iran). Additionally, the book relied on published government documents, including Imam Musa Sadr be Ravayat-e Asnad-e SAVAK (Musa Sadr according to SAVAK Documents, 3 volumes), Hezb-e Democrat-e Kurdestan-e Araq be Ravayet-e SAVAK (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party according to SAVAK), and Ravabet-e Iran va Araq be Ravayat-e SAVAK (Iran-Iraq relations according to SAVAK). Other than these Persian documents, the biographical interview accounts collected by Harvard University's Iranian Oral History Project and The Foundation for Iranian Studies contained significant insights into the Shah's threat assessment and decision-making processes. Besides, there have been

[10] Ibid. p. 40.

several Persian sources which show the Shah's view toward non-state foreign policy. These include memoirs of Assadollah Alam, the Shah's closest advisor, former prime minister, and Minister of the Imperial Court, which shed light on the Shah's day-to-day ruling over the country; of Colonel Isa Pejman, head of the section of "Kurdistan" in SAVAK; and of Major General Mansour Qadar, Iran's ambassador to Beirut. Other important sources are memories of Iranian revolutionaries, including Sadegh Tabatabaie, Seyyed Musa Sadr's nephew and first deputy of prime minister after the Revolution.

In the U.S., I gathered documents from the National Archives in College Park, Maryland. I have used documents from the Richard Nixon Presidential Library's online website[11] and the Gerald Ford Presidential Library's online website.[12] The book benefited from published government documents, including Foreign Relations of the United States-Historical Documents (FRUS), CIA: The Pike Report, Public Papers of the Presidents: Dwight D. Eisenhower 1953 and Gerald R. Ford 1976–77, the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Israel State Archives Online Collection, and Special Collection: A Life in Intelligence—The Richard Helms Collections (CIA-Helms). I also collected the National Security Archive documents from George Washington University (GWU),[13] the CIA Records Search Tool (CREST) at the National Archives in College Park, the FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) Electronic Reading Room,[14] and the history collection of the Office of CIA.[15]

I have also conducted several in-depth interviews with a number of key observers who were, directly and indirectly, engaged in Iran's non-state foreign policy. Major among them were Ebrahim Yazdi, Iran's second foreign minister after the Islamic Revolution, and Seyyed Ali-Akbar Mohtashamipour, the former interior minister in the 1980s. Both Yazdi and Mohtashamipour were among prominent revolutionaries engaged in politics of the south of Lebanon. I also interviewed Seyyed Hossein Nasr, a famous Islamic philosopher. As a head of the Imperial Iranian Academy

[11] Available at https://www.nixonlibrary.gov.
[12] Available at https://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/collections-digital.aspx.
[13] Also available at http://nsarchive.gwu.edu.
[14] Available at http://www.foia.cia.gov.
[15] Available at https://www.cia.gov/offices-of-cia/intelligence-analysis/history.

of Philosophy, Nasr had a close friendship with both Sadr and Iran's Royal Court. These oral accounts served to correct inconsistencies encountered in the written material. However, to ensure the reliability of the interviewees, their accounts have been cross-checked. The interviews with Iranian officials, in particular, have revealed details that so far have rarely—if ever—been discussed openly in Iran. Many of these accounts have never been made available to the public before.

The book addresses Iran's non-state foreign policy in a period between the Iraqi coup of 1958 and the collapse of the Pahlavi regime in 1979. In order to analyze the evolution and dynamics of Iran's non-state foreign policy under the Shah's reign, the book adopts a chronological structure. This is done in eight separate chapters. Chapter 2 examines driving forces behind the evolution of Iran's connections with the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia. It contains three sections. The first section assesses geopolitical and geocultural threats that prompted the Shah to build connections with non-state entities in Iraq and Lebanon. The second section tackles regional and international opportunities that convinced the Shah to implement Iran's non-state foreign policy. The third section demonstrates the vital role institutions played in the evolution and dynamics of Iran's non-state foreign policy. The rest of the chapters, from the third chapter to the eighth, historically trace Iran's non-state foreign policy in different epochs, each containing two sections: one focused on Iran's relations with the Iraqi Kurds and the other focused on Iran's relations with the Lebanese Shia. The third chapter begins with the historical background of Iranian-Iraqi Kurdish and Iranian-Lebanese Shia connections before the Iraqi coup of 1958. The fourth chapter provides a detailed account of how Iran constructed networks with the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia between 1958 and 1963. The fifth chapter focuses on Iran's massive support of the Kurds in fighting the pan-Arab regime of Baghdad as well as the Shia, though less significantly, in challenging Nasserism in the Levant in the years between 1963 and 1968. The sixth chapter details another course when the Shah began to scale back his support of Iran's non-state allies in a period between 1968 and 1973. The seventh chapter shows how Tehran terminated its ties with the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia between 1973 and 1977. Finally, the last chapter relates to Iran's unsuccessful efforts to revive its connections. The book conclusion wraps up the account of Iran's ties with the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia, pointing to the "civilizational and geographical forces" behind Iran's

non-state foreign policy. Systematically and methodically constructed, these chapters trace the first-hand history of Iran's connections with the Iraqi Kurds and the Lebanese Shia in the pre-revolutionary era.

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